



NEWS

Federal Communications Commission
445 12th Street, S.W.
Washington, D. C. 20554

News Media Information 202 / 418-0500
Internet: <http://www.fcc.gov>
TTY: 1-888-835-5322

This is an unofficial announcement of Commission action. Release of the full text of a Commission order constitutes official action.
See MCI v. FCC, 515 F.2d 385 (D.C. Cir. 1974).

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
September 26, 2013

NEWS MEDIA CONTACT:
Janice Wise (202) 418-8165
Email: janice.wise@fcc.gov

FCC OPENS PROCEEDING TO CONSIDER ELIMINATION OF THE UHF DISCOUNT

Washington, D.C. – The Federal Communications Commission today initiated a proceeding to consider eliminating a provision that gives special treatment to UHF channels under its national television ownership cap.

Called the UHF discount, the provision was adopted nearly 30 years ago when UHF signals were regarded as technically inferior to VHF signals in analog television broadcasting. The broadcast television ownership rule prohibits a single entity from owning stations that reach in the aggregate more than 39% of total television households nationwide. The UHF discount allows stations broadcasting in UHF to count toward that cap only 50% of the television households in their Designated Market Areas, as opposed to the 100% requirement for VHF stations.

With the transition of full-power stations to digital broadcasting in 2009, the technical inferiority of UHF appears to be a thing of the past. Therefore, the technical justification for the UHF discount no longer seems to exist. With today's action, the Commission seeks to ensure that its rules reflect the current state of television broadcasting technology. The proceeding also furthers the Commission's mandate to evaluate its rules to make certain they continue to serve the public interest.

Specifically, the Notice of Proposed Rulemaking seeks comment on the following tentative conclusions and proposals:

- The Commission has the authority to modify the national television ownership rule, including the authority to revise or eliminate the UHF discount.
- The UHF discount should be eliminated from the national television ownership rule because the historical justification for the discount no longer exists.
- If the UHF discount is eliminated, grandfathering should be accorded to existing broadcast station ownership groups that exceed the 39% national audience cap by virtue of the elimination of the discount and to proposed station combinations that exceed the 39% cap by virtue of the elimination of the discount if an application is pending with the Commission or the Commission has approved the transaction but it is not yet consummated when the NPRM is released. Grandfathered ownership combinations subsequently sold or transferred would be required to comply with the national ownership cap in existence at the time of the transfer.
- Should the Commission consider adopting a VHF discount at this time?

Action by the Commission September 26, 2013, by Notice of Proposed Rulemaking (FCC 13-123). Acting Chairwoman Clyburn and Commissioner Rosenworcel with Commissioner Pai

dissenting. Acting Chairwoman Clyburn, Commissioners Rosenworcel and Pai issuing statements. MB Docket No. 13-236.

For further information, contact Brendan Holland (202- 418-2757; brendan.holland@fcc.gov) or Johanna Thomas (202-418-7551; johanna.thomas@fcc.gov). Press contact: Janice Wise (202-418-8165; janice.wise@fcc.gov).

-FCC-

For news and information about the FCC, please visit: www.fcc.gov